

cloud of Xochimilco flowers,
cloying as the topping from a birthday cake.
Only your anchor hand stops my heart, that kite,

from bursting its frame,
so buoyed is it -- a comic
strip balloon filled with exclamation points, light
warm and waxen and birthday-candle brazen
flows down from my heart and makes our hands unite.

-- Roger Finch

Tokyo, Japan

SAME DAY DEVELOPING

Due to problems in the darkroom, the place that promised "same day developing" was unable to develop my pictures the same day. I had to go back the next day. They were very sorry about the inconvenience. I sipped complimentary coffee and looked at lenses in a velvet display case (just as I had the previous day). Then I heard that dreaded voice from the darkroom: "We've got problems...." The identical problems. Already I could see the same day developing in that place.

OLIVER

I'm walking behind a man in a blue turban. This is the diamond district. Obviously, if the diamonds are anywhere, they are hidden in his turban. He keeps touching it. It is pinned from the inside. Now someone comes out of a coffee shop and almost knocks him over. Instinctively his hands fly up to make sure the turban is still secure. He glances this way and that, hoping he hasn't attracted too much attention. As he hurries across the block I see his reflection in a store window. He has olive skin. It's exactly five shades darker than an olive.